

THE FEDERAL SPOTLIGHT

Here Are Bills Congress Passed Affecting Government Employees

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This session of Congress proved to be a very productive one for government employees as the following list of bills shows. In several cases neither the public law section number nor the date of presidential signing is shown but President Johnson is certain to sign them within the next few days.

Heading the list approved by Congress were bills providing for pay raises and annuity increases. But there were other significant benefits enacted, including fringe benefits such as severance pay and larger uniform allowances.

CLAIMS — Public Law 89-185, approved Sept. 15, amends titles 10 and 14, U.S. Code, and the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees' Claims Act of 1964, with respect to the settlement of claims against United States by members of the uniformed services and civilian officers and employees of the United States for damages to, or loss of, personal property incident to their service, and for other purposes. This act increases the present limitation on the settlement of claims for personal property losses incident to the service of personnel of the military departments and the Coast Guard from \$6,500 to \$10,000, and on the settlement of claims up to \$6,500 of the personnel of other agencies, under uniform policies prescribed by the President.

EMPLOYMENT — Public Law 89-261, approved Oct. 19, repeals section 165 of the Revised Statutes relating to the appointment of women to clerkships in the executive departments. This act repeals an 1870 statute which was interpreted as vesting in agency heads, rather than in the President, the authority to decide whether the filling of a position should be limited to one sex or the other.

HEALTH BENEFITS — Public Law 89-45, approved June 22, amends the Retired Federal Employees Health Benefits Act with respect to government contribution for expenses incurred in the administration of the act. Public Law 89-45, approved Oct. 19, amends section 18 of the Civil Service Retirement

expenses, thus permitting the Appropriations Committee to authorize such expenses as may be justified by the Civil Service Commission each year.

HOURS OF WORK — Public Law 89-116, approved Aug. 9, establishes a five-day workweek for postmasters. The act also permits the basic salary of postmasters in fourth-class post offices to be readjusted on a calendar-year basis instead of a fiscal-year basis.

PERSONNEL CEILING — Public Law 89-114, approved Aug. 6, 1965, exempts the Postal Field Service from section 1310 of the Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1952. This act exempts permanent personnel of the postal field service from the ceiling on the number of permanent federal employees established by the Whitten amendment.

RETIREMENT — Public Law 89-17, approved May 1, clarifies the application of certain annuity increase legislation. This act clarifies beyond any doubt the designation of those persons who are entitled to receive an increase in annuities payable out of the civil service retirement and disability fund as a result of legislation enacted by Congress in 1958 and 1962.

PUBLIC LAW 89-205, approved Sept. 17, 1965, provides certain increases in annuities payable from the civil service retirement and disability fund. This act increases annuities which commenced on or before Oct. 1, 1956, by 11.1 percent and annuities which commenced after Oct. 1, 1956, but not later than Dec. 1, 1965, by 6.1 percent. The act also increases the annuities of widows and widowers of former employees who died before the survivorship amendments of 1948 by the lesser of 15 percent or \$10 a month. It provides for future cost-of-living increases, effective the first day of the third month after the price index shows a level for three consecutive months of at least 3 percent above the index for July 1965, or the index for the month used for determining the most recent cost-of-living increase.

PUBLIC LAW 89-205, approved Oct. 19, 1965, amends section 18 of the Civil Service Retirement

Act, as amended. The new act extends the annuity increase provisions of Public Law 89-205, above, to retiring employees whose annuities commence after Dec. 1 and not later than Dec. 31, 1965.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE — Public Law 89, approved October, 1965 amends title 38 of the U.S. Code to provide increases in the rates of disability compensation payable to veterans. Section 5 of the Act extends the benefits of the Veterans Preference Act of 1944 to persons who are injured while enroute to or from induction into active military service in the Armed Forces of the United States.

PAY — Public Law 89, approved October, 1965, Federal Employees Salary Act of 1965, provides a 3.6 percent increase in rates of the statutory schedules for the Classification Act, the postal field service, the Foreign Service and the Department of Medicine and Surgery in the Veterans Administration, effective the beginning of the first pay period after Oct. 1, 1965. Similar increases are also provided for employees of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation County Committees, for assistant U.S. attorneys, and for certain employees in the legislative and judicial branches.

The Act also authorizes severance pay for employees who are involuntarily separated through no fault of their own. Also, Classification Act employees are given the right of appeal to the Civil Service Commission when their work performance is determined not to be of an acceptable level of competence. The act also revises the present law on overtime and holiday pay for postal employees.

ALLOWANCES — Public Law 89, approved October, 1965, Federal Employees Salary Act of 1965, Section 13 increases from \$100 to \$125 the maximum amount available for reimbursement to federal employees who must purchase uniforms. Section 6 of the act authorizes the payment of a relocation allowance to employees in the postal field service when they are transferred or relocated from one official station to another.

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